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Argentina. Presidente.
Message of the President of the Republic on opening the Argentine Congress.

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MESSAGE

OF THE

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC

ON OPENING THE SESSIONS

OF THE

Argentine Congress

IN

MAY 1903

BUENOS AIRES

Imprenta TRIBUNA, Bartolomé Mitre 626

1903

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Gentlemen, Senators and Deputies:

Congress, this year, opens its Sessions finding the Republic, free from fears or misunderstandings of interior or exterior complications or dangers; considered by other nations growing and vigorously developing midst a prosperous and flourishing situation. The crisis has been as painful as it has been prolonged, but we have known how to suffer and overcome bad times and disasters by force of perseverance and solidity, acquiring thereby knowledge and experience which we should utilize in the future.

An era of real and positive progress has commenced. The country is full of confidence in its own strength and devotes itself energetically to reproductive labor. Capital is returning on a considerable scale, and with satisfaction we see Argentine credit in the European markets completely reestablished, wich is the most powerful agent of our wealth and civilization.

The abundant crops, with which we have been favored and which evoke the recollections of biblical blessings, have stimulated in all spheres the spirit of enterprise, which will acquire fresh impulse in view of the prospects of a more beneficent and fruitful year. Industrial, com-

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mercial and financial life is regaining its former vigour. Imports show more movement; exports reach proportions hitherto unknown; the revenue is increasing and there is a marked reaction in all businesses.

Our relations with other Sovereign States have been cordially extended and from the extremity of the globe, representatives of nations belonging to different races and institutions have arrived, bringing us their friendly and sympathetic wishes; a recognition and expression towards a period of concord and human unity.

You are aware, that in spite of our boundary dispute with Chile being submitted to the arbitration of His Britannic Majesty's Government, rivalries and reciprocal mistrust continued between the two nations, embittered, by inevitable incidents, pertaining to such long litigation and so extended a frontier. In a really critical moment, the two Governments spoke out, conscious of their duties and responsabilities and rising superior to all mistrust and rivalry, arrived at the celebration of the compacts of May, which included general arbitration, equalization of the fleets and the designation of the same arbitrator to fix on the spot the divisional line which the definitive award might prescribe.

These compacts which received, after enlightened debate, the sanction of the Hon. Congress and which moreover were unanimously consecrated by opinion constitute a great example and lesson, applauded by the whole world; these compacts prepared the ground and ended by predisposing the two nations to receive with respectful adherence the award of His Britannic Majesty, which put an end to the arduous controversy, of more than half a century. The two nations have suddenly seen disappear without loss of dignity the great dangers to which the old dispute exposed them with its suite of agitations and conti-

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nuous anxieties. They have imbued themselves with the meaning of that great act to which they had beforehand submitted, understanding that they should place themselves above all observation that might weaken superior authority and the transcendency of that award wherein results the spirit of equity and justice which th Arbitrator has obeyed.

I have now here to state the debt of gratitude we have contracted towards His Britannic Majesty who with such good will accepted the occasion of rendering this eminent service to the two nations, which thanks to him, henceforward, recognize the same line of demarcation.

When the moment arrived to carry into effect the mission with which the Arbitrator was provisionally invested by one of the said compacts, he proceeded about it with exceptional celerity, as if to compensate for so much tension and prolonged expectancy in the past. The Commissioners charged with the material demarcation of the frontier have already returned after concluding their work. The land marks nailed to the Cordillera, not only signalize the limits of the two sister nations, but will be at the same time the indestructible monument testifying hereafter how, in this part of America, the most noble aspirations and ideals of the right of peoples have been realized.

The results of this policy commence to be felt. The two nations have drawn near to each other and this movement has sufficed to dispel unjust forewarnings and to base our future relations on reciprocal esteem and respect.

Commerce restrained and languishing in both countries is returning to its accustomed channels, and on all sides the arts of civilization and peace are reviving.

The Argentine Republic has once more shown in the compacts of May and their loyal execution the elevation

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and traditional disinterestedness of her international policy.

America has recently felt emotioned by the motive of intervention carried out by some European nations in Venezuela. Among the causes invoked figure the arrears in the service of the debt contracted by that nation in order to execute public works. This made it to be supposed that when foreign citizens or subjects contract loans of public nature the State to which they belong is also a part of those operations although the lenders may not have reckoned on that intervention and might have well calculated the circumstances of each country in order to fix the conditions of the operation. Private contract would thus become converted into an obligation between States.

It appeared to me that in this case a dangerous doctrine would be established in front of which I should not remain indifferent. It is already public, the Note in which this Government expressed to that of the United States its opinions respecting the action developing in the Carribean Sea.

It was limited to pointing out the dangers which, for the nations of this Continent, the doctrine contains, by virtue of which Loans of a public nature, contracted with foreign citizens or subjects, taking into account the conditions of each country and imposing by arrangement with them clauses more or less onerous, and interest rates more or less high, can be converted at a given moment, without bad faith intervening, into a cause for international offence, which authorises the employment of force, the occupation of American territory and the subordination and tutelage of local governments, if not their total disappearance, by means of financial interventions. The comments advanced on learning the terms and aim of that communication were not at first favorable, but as soon as they

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became known, opinion reacted both in Europe and America, it being found justifiable and moreover recognized that under such circunstances, we were bound to assume that attitude.

The Argentine Note, in reality resumes itself into enouncing elemental principles which comprise the indisputable right of these nationalities to grow and develop under the protection of international law. The doctrine does not exclude any of the obligations imposed on civilized nations by peoples rights, neither does it recognize priorities, nor atenuating responsabilities therefore. Limiting itself to affirm the sovereignty of the people it expresses at same time the commotions and alarms which would arise among them through any act of colonization or conquest in a region of this Continent.

The Reply of the United States Government agrees fundamentally with these declarations and recommends international arbitration in the settlement of questions arising from national obligations.

Though that Government has given no decision in respect of compulsory collection of the public debt, and neither was it solicited in any form, yet it is evidently satisfactory that the Argentine Note produced effect; authorized and eloquent voices having been raised in support of our same doctrine, even in the English Parliament.

In short it has been understood that the Republic did not go in search of protection or alliances, but limited herself to plainly and fully express ideas motived by the European intervention in a section of this Continent, which has more than once been convoked to hear the opinion of its States and consequently to establish the basis of a common right.

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In internal Government, the Republic progresses within the orbit of fundamental institutions, without anything extraordinary having occurred to alter the relations, daily more consolidated, between the National and Provincial Governments and of the latter among themselves. Founded as they are on the base of a reciprocal liberty of action, within the limits of our federal system, the general rule of the most prudent criterion is, doubtless, not to modify them, except in cases provided by the Constitution for powers and forms it has created and in all of these with a clear application of principles already well defined in our experience of a half century.

The intervention, of the National Government in the Province of Buenos Aires in February and March last and its abstention, in the request addressed by the ex Governor of La Rioja, excluded from ofice by the local legislature, events which took place almost at the same time, have been solved by the Executive using its own attributions subject to constitutional principles and forms that govern each case and in presence of the circunstances of the moment, which in a great measure decide the action of political powers.

With respect to the National territories, where activity possesses a vast and fertile field of action, their economic growth is visible and their prosperity beyond doubt, owing to great natural wealth and the improved facilities of access and communication they offer through the progress of the country and the efforts of the Government.

The Executive has again studied the position and necessities of the Territories in general and in particular, and persists in believing, as necessary, the revision of the organic law of 1884. That reform was already proposed to Your Honorable Chambers by the Executive in the Message and project of the 1st of August 1900 in which I have

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thought it convenient to introduce certain modifications which I will submit for your study.

During the last month of your prorogued Sessions last year, strikes ocurred in this Capital which were about to embrace a considerable area, to threaten public wealth and the sources of national prosperity in the moment of their most active development.

The Government aware of the causes of these movements, in a great measure worthy of the legislators attention but in another, not less important way the product of elements foreign to real social interests, hastened to solicit from Y. H. Chambers the sanction of law, permitting the state of siege to be declared in the Capital and Provinces of Buenos Aires and Santa Fe, where are the principal ports for shipping our produce abroad, and which the strike tended to obstruct or prevent.

That exceptional measure allowed the Executive to employ more efficient resources for the protection of workmen and commerce in general restricted their operations by the violent means which the strikers began to put into practice, and for the repression of which, the faculties and ordinary procedures invested in the police were insufficient.

In face of those disturbances which revealed the danger of certain exotic elements, incorporated with our population, under the shelter, until then unlimited, of the laws in force relating to the foreigner, Y. H. Chambers believed it convenient to sanction a law entitled "of residence", and which allows the Executive to exclude from National Territory, foreigners who only bring to it purposes of disorder or social commotion, and not those of contributing to any of the ends of the civilized community.

This law, already delayed in forming part of our institutions, is one of security and defence for Argentine society

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which is not obliged to accept in its midst, disorderly elements, repudiated by other nations. Possibly the law is susceptible of being perfected, for Congress would be able to study it now more calmly than in the pressing moments when it was decreed.

Our fundamental charter has been explicit in its purpose to atract laborious and respectable immigration, and it is also the interest of all emigration countries to extend outside their limits the legitimate influence of its economic labour and intellectual culture. Far then from the law of "residence" being considered a restriction of the right to inhabit our soil, it is on the contrary a law of confidence for laborious and civilizing immigration.

The agitation among the working class last year, diffused by verbal and written propagation and partial or general strikes amounting to twenty six, twenty of which proposed a dimunition of work and increase of salary, assumed from the start a violent and aggressive character against the person and belongings of workmen who refused to follow the movement and against the very authorities impelled by resisting Societies federally organized and in whose governing councils predominated anarchical elements and the habitual and most violent agitators of the working classes.

Both the state of siege law and that of "residence" have been exercited with the greatest prudence. Respecting the first, the Authorities restricted themselves to the detention of those persons who freely and openly incited to violence or disorder; and as to the latter it has only been applied to those most known as dangerous to the public peace and avowed propagators of violent and subsersive means. The results that one and the other gave in a short time, by extinguishing the movement and restablishing

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public traffic, have justified the wholesome purpose which led to their sanction.

Crime in the Capital of the Republic is augmenting every year at a considerable rate, due on the one hand to natural complications of life in a social grouping growing with such rapidity; on the other to deficiencies in our criminal legislation, which to the leniency of punishment adds that of omitting among deeds classed as crime, a series of immoral or rascally acts, which, today, elude every suppression.

Not the least noteworthy is what corresponds in this statistic to reconvictions which treating of misdemeanours relatively trifling, to the density of the population, yet assume the nature of a problem which calls for urgent solution.

The sanction of the projected reforms of the Penal Code awaiting your deliberation, would likely solve all these questions.

Postal and telegraphic communications during the past year and that of the current one have developed in proportion to the progress of the country both in the extension of lines and in the revenue they produce which may be calculated for 1903 at six millions of national dollars.

The internal telegraph network, already reaches the extreme south of the continent and places the Capital of the Republic in immediate contact with the most distant points of the Patagonian coast down to Cape Virgin. During the current year the Cordillera lines which already reach "16th October" should become united with those of the Atlantic, thus the country will be connected throughout its continental extension by electric communication, and the connections of our maritime commerce and of the growing settlements in our far south with the universal market will be insured.

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The Sanitary state of the country has continued to be satisfactory; no case of exotic sickness having been denounced.

The approaching construction of the Bacteriologic Institute with the resources afforded by the law of the 23rd December 1901, which has created a new and important branch of revenue; the water supply, the installation in the Capital port of a sanitary station, which from now reduces to a minimum the inconveniences of the passenger and of commerce, by the entrance of our large transatlantic steamers: all this, added to the excellent hygienic conditions of the city of Buenos Aires, is a reason for public health becoming day by day more invulnerable.

Over and above the rules and sanitary procedures indicated by international agreements and congresses to which the Republic is invited and at which it is present with the greatest interest, the sanction of the projected law for sanitary government, which for so long back is called for, and which the Executive had the honor to present to you last year and which it again recommends to your study, will greatly facilitate the improvement in all services and the most efficient action of the authorities.

Fears of war and loss of the crops in some provinces in the year 1901 to 1902 caused a great commercial paralization, and brought with it as an inevitable consequence an important dimunition in the public revenue.

The ordinary and extraordinary budget for 1902 was fixed at $ 33.027.223.26 gold and $ 102.946.092.66 national currency.

Resources were calculated at $ 47.413.347 gold and $ 72.890.000 national currency. Meanwhile the ordinary and extraordinary revenue only reached $ 40.240.264 gold and $ 69.129.483 national currency; amounts inferior to

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what had been calculated $7.173.082 gold and $ 3.760.516 national currency, or say the whole reduced to paper $ 20.108.431.

The calculation of the resources of the previous year brought level with the ordinary and extraordinary expenses, the difference would have resulted in a serious deficit, if the Executive had not, in time, perceived the fall in the revenue and had not with opportune prevision employed means advisable in like circumstances, limiting expenses with what was compatible with the requirements of administration. Due to this system of economy and to the resource of the National Bank, comprised in the same estimate law, the deficit became reduced to the lowest figure, it being possible to add that it has now disappeared by applying the surplus of the entries during the first months of this year.

The remarkable decrease in imports and revenue during last year was compensated by the increase in exports which attained $ 179.486.727 gold, exceeding by $ 11.760.625 gold the result of 1901 and representing a balance in favor of the country in the balance of exterior commerce of $ 76.447.471, the effects of which are noted in various ways; acting likewise on international exchange which has been favorably maintained, facilitating the payments of the importer and the draft operations effected by the administration in order to liquidate their obligations.

The rate of exchange is every time more favorable. Our stocks, external and internal are obtaining the highest quotations.

The amortization of the External Consolidated Debt which had been suspended from 1893 and renewed on the 1st July 1901 has continued to be made with every punctuality. In 1902 the sum of $ 5.368.466 was applied to that purpose. In the same year, for the amortization of the Consolidated Internal Debt there were paid $ 8.028.993

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national ocurrency and $ 459.600 gold. As, in the same year, in fulfilment of special laws $ 2.892.600 were emitted the decrease in the Consolidated Internal Debt only amounts $ 5.136.393 national ocurrency and $ 459.600 gold.

The punctuality and rectitude of our procedure has without doubt whatever influenced the improvement of our credit and the facilities on which the Administration counts to effect its financial operations.

The improvement in the quotation of our loans, to which I referred, also bears witness thereto; some of which, the 5 and 6 % have reached a quotation above par, which gives us a glimpse of the possibility of reducing the interest at an early future by means usually employed by nations in these cases.

This same improvement in credit has permitted the Executive to place under more favorable conditions the loan of 1891 and the Stock of the National Bank in Liquidation; operations authorized by the Hon. Chambers, thus having exceeded the promise to not part with these Stocks except under conditions which would honor the Nation.

Further, the fact, without instance, of an enormous accumulation of metal which continues to flow from its privileged markets should be considered a revealing sign of the country; and of the confidence it inspires, and which unequivocably proves the truth and solidity of the economic improvement.

Deposited in the Conversion Safe alone, the reare in their moment more than twenty three millions gold dollars, exchanged for national currency circulating with the guarantee of the Nation at the rate fixed by the Law.

I think that law should decidedly be maintained, and that we ought to replace the funds diverted from their object, through known causes, when the state of the Ex-

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chequer permits. In this way the promise to convert at the same legal rate will be effected within a more or less early date, and it could not be modified without causing great economic and commercial perturbations.

Among the initiative projects also recommended to the legislator there is scarely any more productive of effect than the revision of our taxation Laws. The Honorable Chamber of Deputies will have understood this, referring to the Customs' legislature, when appointing from their body a Committee to study its system and to project the necessary reforms.

The Executive congratulates itself on that tendency and leans towards the success of the investigation which it would be convenient to extend to the Laws of internal taxation.

The prosperous march of affairs beginning in all branches of production and commerce and which must reflect on the public revenue, will enable us to suppress the additional duty with which exports were burdened in order to face the exigencies of an extraordinary situation. I believe, when estimates and the calculation of resources for next year are drawn up, the opportunity will have arisen to relieve the import business from this charge.

Law N° 4064 of January 24th 1902, authorizes the Executive to construct public Works to the amount of $ 15.000.000 gold and also to issue Bonds on the value of the railroads, property of the Nation. I have thought it might be prejudicial to the credit of the Nation, using this last authorization, and that I ought to limit myself for that object, to dispose, slowly and in proportion of their redemption, of the public Debt Bonds given in guarantee of loans, deducting the sum which should be delivered to the Bank of the Argentine Nation in fulfilment of Law N° 4053, January 13th 1902.

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In these circumstances, Messrs Greenwood & Comp. have just made use of the option which the respective contract accords them, for the total amount of the Capital Port Bonds, which they hold in guarantee, and which amount to £ 1.459.400 at the stipulated rate of 35 °|o.

This sale of Bonds leaves to the Government an excess of $ 3.613.654 gold.

Your Honorable Chambers are aware of the reasons which obliged the Government to contract this debt at a short date, the principal ones being in order to avoid the sale of the Port Bonds, which the contructors had the right to realize, at a rate calculated that would not exceed 7 %. Taking into consideration these antecedents, we cannot fail to recognize the good result of the operation.

The creation of the Federal Courts of Appeal with residence in the Capital, La Plata, Cordoba and Paraná completing after forty years the federal organization, satisfies an old desire.

There exist better guarantees of Justice; the Supreme Court has been discharged from the arduous labor which formerly weighed exclusively on it, and therefore the substantion of law suits will be shorter. With the same object was the installation of Federal Courts of Justice in Bahia Blanca and Santa Fe, called for on account of the population and important capital invested there.

The Executive is preoccupied with the prison administration in the Capital and National Territories.

The establishment of a correctional colony for minors, after models furnished by the most advanced nations, in which the system of repression is combined with physical, moral and intellectual education has become an exaction of our times and our social culture. I will propose to you that establishment which would allow of the correctional

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prison for minors from the penitentiary where they are improperly serving their sentence. This would then be completed in the workshops and schools required by the penitentiary system.

The construction of the penal settlement of Ushuaia' initiated last year, advances rapidly by the work of the convicts themselves.

The territorial prisons will only confine delinquents punished with imprisonment or correctional sentence and whose evasion it is at times difficult to avoid on account of the insecurity of those spots and prepare for us greater evils or dangers.

It is necessary to revise last years law which orders the construction of the edifice for the federal and ordinary tribunals of the Capital. The unsuccess of public tender reveals certain deficiencies and inconveniences to be overcome in order to realize that work, so urgently called for.

Superior instruction will receive a considerable impulse with the economic independence of the national universities, acquired by virtue of the last reforms. When the practical school of lawful medicine be constructed and the Morgue—which is proceeding by virtue of a special law—and the Museum of Natural History is allotted a house, of its own indispensable in front of threatening destruction to its valuable collections, the reform of its superior scientific studies will be fundamental and its results of inmense utility for the Nation.

Shortly will be presented you the plan relating to secondary instruction divided into two cycles, the first embracing general instruction, the completion of primary instruction; the second preparatory instruction corresponding to those four years of study and to the last three, the pupil opting for one or the other, according to his choice. In this way the year of preparatory studies has also been eliminated from the University programme which did not

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correspond to it, thus correcting a plan of which the results have been negative.

By the law you decreed last year, the building will shortly be proceeded with, throughout the Republic, of premises, their own property in which national colleges, normal and special schools will be installed; works which will do honor to the country, redound to the benefit of teaching and later on relieve the Treasury from the considerable sums today invested in rents, thus realizing in secondary instruction the fitting combination, made practical in the primary.

At this moment the purchase of laboratories, cabinets and other instruments of teaching is being contracted, using for that purpose the funds granted by the law of Estimates.

The concourse of pupils to the National colleges has this year been considerable, and this fact is not independent of the late reforms.

An improvement of the actual professorship is aimed at, in accordance with the lines of teaching, and the reorganization of those establishments under a new educational and disciplined regimen, for the adoption of which the opinion of specialists has to be taken into account, who have already been consulted when treating of the secondary studies and programmes.

The new plans of instruction purposes to give to normal professorship a scientific and literary preparation which would allow of its being utilized later on in secondary official and private institutes. Instruction should be given by professors with diploma; with all the more reason when it is proposed to endow the respective establishments with laboratories, cabinets and all the appliances exacted by modern teaching.

Ordinary education spreads more and more throughout

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the Republic, protected by the law which controls it, and which in 20 years of practice has proved efficient.

The work realized, in the past year, by the National Council of Education has been important. The inauguration of 21 spacious and hygienic scholastic buildings replacing the old inadequate and unhealthy premises, as also the inscription of eleven thousand new pupils in the primary official schools are results which speak eloquently in favor of the technical direction and of the economic administration of the schools. Teaching here, has also become completely changed. The regular and independent march of primary instruction is assured. The School Treasury possesses 4 millions of dollars invested in Bonds. The pension fund has been restored. These advancements have been attained without employment of extraordinary measures or especial weight on the country or on the public treasury.

In accordance with the authorization of Your Hon. Chambers two commercial schools have been founded in Concordia and Bahia Blanca, to which the character of primary commercial schools has been given in order to respond the better to the necessities of those centres.

The reform in the plan of studies of the Rosario commercial school, will place it in relation to secondary instruction, thus extending its benefits. The commercial school of the Capital will be the superior institute, crowning that teaching, once its theoretical and practical studies shall have been reformed.

The national industrial school which will shortly be installed in its own premises, will receive the enlargement required, and will consult the necessities of national industries, in order to form the future directors and instructed workmen for our manufactories and workshops.

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In the Ministry of Agriculture, vigorous impulse has been given in all its departments, which are so closely related to the public wealth. The administration is developing and proceeds on certain tracks; attending to immigration, public lands and colonization, to investigations and schooling in agriculture and cattle; to the knowledge of territory in all its phases, to exploration of mines and borings for water; to matters of animal sanitary police, and to our national and international commercial problems; all matters of vital interest to the country.

Immigration has decreased, due undoubtedly to the crisis and prolonged bad crops in the last years, having touched its lowest last year which between arrivals and departures showed only a favorable balance of 13.560 persons. It should however be notet that if the population has not augmented in a sensible degree, the elements which leave are less adapted to the style and necessities of the country than those now arriving. These, in a great majority agriculturists, easily find well remunerated work.

I hold the firm conviction that, in the proportion our economic conditions improve, we offer more guarantees of peace and justice, that we regulate work and the position of the working class and perfect our great natural industries so has the tide of immigration return and swell anew.

In the matter of public lands we have made a great stride by the new Law sanctioned by Y. H. Chambers last year and ruling already in questions of most urgent application.

This Law, briefly and simply will permit of land being diversely applied, according to quality, and will facilitate its occupation by real settlers, thus handing over to work and production those vast regions as yet deserted. The first application of this law has been the direct sale of lots of one league in the territory of Chubut, for pastoral colo-

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nies, to immigrants from South Africa and other parts exacting from them Argentine naturalization.

Pastoral colonization will be the most rapid and convenient form of populating Patagonia which can hold many millions of cattle and sheep. In the meantime exploring commissions are at this moment in regions up to now almost unknown.

The administration has also been employed in terminating the liquidation of old land matters, having recouped for the Nation 325.264 hectares.

The Commissions appointed in 1901, and who have already concluded their work, have explored and measured 9.947.000 hectares and if to this we add the area of 40.732.000 hectares, actually being explored we shall have a known area, at the end of this year, of 50.000.000 of hectares, or say 20.000 square leagues which implies more tham the half of the land area which is fiscal property.

The condition of the national colonies is prosperous, and rapidly advancing, as also the towns on the Atlantic coast, where the Executive expects the colonization from South Africa will give great impulse, seventy leagues, already partly settled, have been destined, for the moment, for that object.

The Agricultural Ministry is also busy with the colonization of those territories by inhabitants from North of Europe, for which purpose various works for making them known are being effected.

The development of agriculture in the Republic is daily greater. The cultivation of wheat, linseed, maize and other cereals embraces an area of 8.000.000 hectares against 3.000.000 ten years ago.

Preferential attention has been given to agricultura

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and pastoral schools. With the scarce means at the disposal of the Ministry of this branch, practical schools have been founded in Villa Casilda and in Cordoba, and in course of formation there are those of Tucuman, San Juan, Las Delicias, Bella Vista and Posadas.

Te diffusion of technicalknowledge and the integral teaching of agriculture and herd business from the simple elementary notions up to the superior institutes for the agronomic and veterinary branches are indispensable for taking advantage of the favorable conditions of our climate and soil.

Delay of this duty by the Authorities would be construed as a real prejudice to the country which through ignorance of modern procedures and methods, does not produce what it should.

The modifications introduced in the animal sanitary police law, in the end of last year, and the complete regulations dictated by the Executive have perfected the service which protects us against the introduction of exotic contagious disease, insures the minute inspection of cattle for export and adopts energetic provision in order to efficiently cope with disease existing in the country.

While these measures were being put in practice, the laborious deliberations for the opening of English ports to Argentine cattle were insistently continued with H. M.'s Government and an agreement was entered into with th Uruguay Republic, consisting of the adoption of identical sanitary precautions, simultaneously decreed by the two Governments, at the same time facilitating the cattle interchange between both countries.

The immediate result of this labor has been the opening of British ports; permitting in the first quarter of this year the live export of 25.000 head of cattle and 95.000 sheep.

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To insure and augment these benefits, there is only wanting for the installations and technical staff of our sanitary inspection, extension and improvement adequate to the importance, surety and credit of our cattle industry.

The export of frozen meat during 1902, is valued at $ 13.572.000 gold as against $ 7.000.000 in 1900, which amounts to an increase of a hundred per cent in the last two years. An equally remarkable increase has ocurred in the export of butter since 1900 in which year it represented a value of $ 264.000 gold and which in 1902 has reached $ 1.280.000 gold.

This is a new source wealth, with a future of extraordinary development.

We may say equally so of mining industry, which commences to awaken serious enterprize.

The Government on its part has commenced the study of the geologic constitution of the soil, by exploring coal formations in Misiones, Santa Cruz, and Neuquen, and opening up the borax deposits in the Territory of "Los Andes". Also explorations in search of underlying water have been undertaken in several parts of the Republic.

International commerce has continued parallel with the progress throughout the country and has been assisted in its growth by the opening of new markets which like South Africa powerfully contribute a new and great impulse to our natural industries.

Imports in the first quarter of the present year reach $ 33.539.498 gold, surpassing the result of the first quarter last year by $ 5.955.223 gold.

It is calculated that in the whole year they will attain $ 123.000.000 gold in which case they will exceed by $ 20.000.000 the previous year.

Exports in the first quarter of this year amount to

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$ 69.351.199 gold: superior by $ 12.639.251 gold to those for an equal period last year. It is estimated that in the whole of this year exportation will attain the really extraordinary figure of $ 250.000.000 gold, which will exceed by $ 76.000.000 gold that of 1902, and almost triplicating this branch of international commerce in 1898.

The movement noted in the ports and in navegation naturally corresponds to the commercial activity which has sprung up anew. The arrivals and departures of vessels it is estimated will reach 11.000.000 tons register.

Not less prosperous, the commerce of the Southern ports of the Republic; National ships and the Hamburg South American Line having carried last year 20.000 tons, leaving it supposed by the movement of the first quartes of the current year that this commerce will be more than doubled in the course of the present one.

The financial difficulties through which we have passed must have held back or postponed many fresh undertakings, but they have not prevented us from taking into conside ration or continuing various and important works, destined to influence the development of public and private wealth, to facilitate water and land transport, provide for national security, better the hygienic conditions of life in the metropolis and in the interior. Likewise we have been able to think of worthily installing the public authorities of the Nation, scholastic establishments, and even philanthropic institutions.

The importance acquired by certain Railways and the multiplying of lines granted at different times, by national and provincial laws have given rise here to problems which have presented themselves under like conditions to other nations, and which will have to be solved in a like way, harmonizing private with public interests.

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This is what occurs with the fusion of some Companies. Monopoly has been in many places the last thing arrived at after disastrous competition.

In the impossibility of avoiding these phenomena, which take place outside the sphere of the Authorities, their intervention should restrict itself to regulating those points where the private interests of the Companies may conflict general interests. Save these difficulties, the fusion o the Companies may become a benefit, in as far as it will allow of their reducing capital, economizing power and working expenses, and thereby cheapening carriage, which is the desired object to which the State inclines.

The development of the National lines will contribute to the same result, their tariffs being based on rules of equity having a principal regard for public interests can designate a rate to which the other private enterprizes aproximate or fit in. This is all the more practicable, when the interest, well understood, of the Companies is to reduce the tariffs to a minimum in order to afford the fullest possible scope to their traffic.

Pursuing these propositions, is to begin by regulating the administration and exploitation of the national railways, so that their expenses should be covered by their traffic returns without burden to the general State revenues and which has been accomplished over and above.

This plan will develop more efficiently, in virtue of the laws lately sanctioned for extending the railway to Bolivia Ledesma, Chaco, San Juan, Santa Fe, and the cable rail to Famatina; laws which are in execution, while the valleys of Salta and Catamarca are being studied with the object of extedding the lines to the centres of production and con-

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sumption, and by these means be able to diminish the cost of transport.

The Central Argentine and Buenos Aires and Rosario Railway Companies have presented themselves to the Government soliciting their fusion. The Executive is carefully studying this matter, which will shortly be submitted for your consideration.

During the past year 388 kilometres of railway lines have been constructed and handed over to public service. The Republic now possesses over 18.000 kilometres of railway. About 20 millions of passengers and more than 14 millions tons of cargo have been transported by these lines, which have a gross return of $ 42.480.000 gold and a net product of $ 20.000.000 gold.

Within the ordinary resources of the estimates we have proceeded with the works required in our principal rivers, in order to facilitate navigation and access to the littoral ports. Those works will receive greater impulse by applying special revenues, assigned them by law, sanctioned during last Sessions.

In October last year I signed the contract for the construction of the Rosario port in accordance with the Law of 1899. The contractors have commenced to receive materials of European manufacture.

The obstacles for taking possession of the necessary land having been removed, it is thought that, at the end of next year, the first section of the port will be handed over to public service.

The tender for the works, so urgently called for, of the widening the Capital port resulted negative, because the proposers did not comply with all the prescriptions of the law.

There is under study a new, more economical project

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and which could be realized in less time than the anterior. This project will be terminated within a few days.

The principal works of the Military port having been executed, and it not being necessary to accelerate the remainder, they are proceeding slowly, on the same plan, with less sacrifce to the Nation.

The works authorized in distant provinces have either been finished or are being executed.

The dyke on the River San Juan, delivered to that province, serves irrigation purposes since last year.

In Villa Mercedes on the River V. like works are in course of construction, in hopes that they will be concluded in the first months of next year.

The works designed for providing potable water to several provincial Capitals are equally being executed, and it is expected they will display all the necessary activity favored by the new law which increased resources and in virtue of agreements effected with the respective Governments. These works favour the provinces of Jujuy, Catamarca, Mendoza, San Juan, San Luis, Santiago del Estero, Salta, Rioja, Santa Fe and Corrientes. In the first four provinces the first section of the works is already finished. In the remainder they are being constructed or will be commenced before the end of the present year.

The law extending the salubrity service of the federal Capital has commenced to operate, which at the same time that it will complete the hygiene of this great city will augment the revenue from these works which, last year, left a gross product of $ 5.460.000 and a net balance of $ 3.450.000.

The Palace of the National Congress is also proceeding actively and next year the legistative sessions will be inaugurated in a precinct worthy of the civilization and progress of the Argentine Nation.

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The Works in connection with the National Colony for the Insane are going on briskly, it fell to me to inaugurate them less than four years ago. The plans adopted are adjusted to the latest indications of science, according to the system, styled "of open doors". Already six pavillions are ready with necessary installations, surrounded by parks avenues and gardens Three hundred insane people, submit ted to the special treatment of the Institute are moreover employed with agricultural pursuits and in various workshops of manual labour, thereby contributing to sustain the Colony founded for their benefit.

The Military Institutions of the Republic have in latter times accomplished extraordinary progress, and the country beholds with satisfaction that the sacrifices made to have a Fleet and an Army, whose material, instruction and discipline shall be up to the standard of the most advanced in Europe, have not been in vain.

The fundamental conscription law which has been carried out with every scruple and justice, has further served to civilize and raise the moral level of certain classes of society, awakening in all healthy and viril energy. Following prescriptions the new general enrolment has been effected throughout the Republic. This operation has been carried out with every exactitude, there being enrolled 260.451 citizens belonging to the Line and the Reserve and 210.643 in the National and Territorial Guard. The first contingent of conscripts was immediately incorporated with obligatory service in the ranks of the Army, with a result surpassing the most optimistic prevision, and which exceeds that obtained by other nations, applying the same system.

To give to the collection of Army constitutive laws the required unity and cohesion, it is now necessary to complete the work of the recruiting law in accord with the new spirit

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which animates it; revising laws for promotions, retirements, reform, military justice etc.

I will opportunely present for your consideration the projects relative to these matters, based on stable and equitable principles, as answers to a solid and definite military organization.

Not for the reason that eventualities have disappeared, which we had to take into account when initiating the perfecting of our military and naval institutions and being known our exterior policy of peace and friendship, should we neglect the work nor cease to aim at its constant improvement, within the ordinary resources of the Nation. If I do not mistake, this is moreover the national feeling.

The naval agreements stipulated with the Republic of Chile have been carried out satisfactorily; proceding to the disarming, which above all reposes in the loyalty and honor of both nations, of a portion of the squadron, which implies a considerable economy.

For this reason a good part of the disponsable men are employed in useful services of instruction or scientific application relating to the progress of the country.

Among these figure the complete hydrographic study of the River Plate and the new buoying which has been inaugurated and which will greatly contribute to the navigation of the estuary. All other services of the Army and Navy whether referring to their education, instruction, and military discipline or to their administration have been duly attended to, and daily exhibit more perceptible progress.

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Gentlemen:

We enter a historic period in which all the elements of life and prosperity apparently combine to assure fortunate times for the Republic, which commences to awaken the curiosity and interest of the world, by its culture, its extraordinary productive power and rapid development.

In our short and national accidental existence we have traversed long sufferings, civil wars, crisis, tyrannies, and disorders, an inmense road, and today we can look to the future, without the uncertainties and anxieties of other epochs, that brought despair, as to our fate, to the most sincere patriots, and to character more serene and more confident in the forces which elaborated the life and modelled the soul of the Argentine Nation.

There doubtless yet remain many efforts to be made, and many conquests of ourselves, so much given to far off deals, and to exact the latest political wisdom in Government, in parties and in constitutional practices, that imagine a degree of supreme perfection to which as yet peoples who count their centuries of existence have not attained.

More than in written law, the republican form rests on public habits and customs. It exacts from citizens a constant exercise of political liberty and the management of the multiple economic and social interests of the comunity.

Protected by peace, strengthened and emancipied by labor, popular education, reciprocal and rational tolerance between men and parties we have to pursue an ascendant way, thus creating a healthy, efficient criterion, which animates the weak and incredulous, stimulates the strong, and restrains exageration and misguidance.

In the meaning of political progress and the task and regulating representative life and guaranteeing individual

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and collective liberty the advanced electoral law dictated last year cannot be an inefficient measure. By abandoning the old system it is to be hoped that the inherent vices will disappear with it. This will doubtless be obtained, if the new law is honorably complied with by political groups, and if judges apply their moralizing and repressive authority with the same severe impartiality they give to common law.

Moreover there would be impressed on electoral struggles the character pertaining to a fruitful debate of interests and ideas which aspire to have their legitimate influence in the legislation and government of public business.

The executive for its part has sought to carry out the purpose of the law, by dividing the districts, with the most crupulous subjection to the prescribed bases, and to the geographical conditions of the Repubiic.

Gentlemen Senators and Deputies:

When, next year, I come for the last time to preside the opening of the Honorable Congress, your legislative body will already have been renewed, and the colleges elected for naming the new President. My intimate desire is, in one case or the other, to see that the most legitimate aspirations be consulted, and the most vital interests and highest tendencies of Argentine patriotism represented. Thus, the laws and the supreme authority of the Nation will be worthy of respect and a solid guarantee of peace and aggrandisement.

On declaring inaugurated the Sessions of this new legislative period, I invoke for your deliberations the protection of Divine Providence.

JULIO A. ROCA

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